



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

JAN 08 2013

Dear Senator Inhofe:

Thank you for your letter of December 17, 2012, expressing concern over the scheduled deliveries of F-16 aircraft to the government of Egypt.

Egypt is a strategic partner with whom we have a long history of close political-military relations that have benefited U.S. interests. For the past 30 years, the F-16 aircraft has been a key component of the relationship between the United States military and the Egyptian Armed Forces. Maintaining this relationship and assisting with the professionalization and the building of the Egyptian Armed Forces' capabilities to secure its borders is one of our key interests in the region.

Egypt continues to play an important role in regional peace and stability. In all of our engagements with President Morsi and his staff, they have reaffirmed Egypt's commitment to its international agreements, including its peace treaty with Israel. Egypt was instrumental in negotiating the Gaza ceasefire, and continues to work with the parties involved to implement it and secure a more lasting peace.

While Egypt is making progress on completing its democratic transition, we continue to press President Morsi to build greater national consensus through a genuine give-and-take on fundamental issues like the Egyptian constitution. We are also encouraging the opposition to engage in such discussions. President Morsi has signed the new constitution into law, and simultaneously canceled a previous decree that had granted his office additional powers. In accordance with constitutional requirements, the government of Egypt will hold general elections this spring. The sitting upper house of parliament now has assumed its legislative authority and will begin discussions on an electoral law regulating the spring elections.

Delaying or cancelling deliveries of the F-16 aircraft would undermine our efforts to address our regional security interests through a more capable Egyptian military and send a damaging and lasting signal to Egypt's civilian and military leadership as we work toward a democratic transition in this key Middle Eastern state.

The Honorable

James M. Inhofe,
United States Senate.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this issue in further detail in a classified setting; my staff will be reaching out to your office shortly to offer an in-person briefing.

Thank you again for your attention to this important matter. Please do not hesitate to contact us further on this or any matter of concern to you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. S. Adams', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David S. Adams
Assistant Secretary
Legislative Affairs